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Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUXEMB 00508 151924Z

45
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 IO-13 OIC-02 SS-15 NSC-05

SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 NEA-10 EA-07 /102 W
---------- 038018
O R 151830Z MAY 76
FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5184
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMMBASSY PARIS 1181
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LUXEMBOURG 0508

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EEC
SUBJ: INFORMAL EC FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG

REF: EC BRUSSELS 4744

SUMMARY: MAY 14-15 INFORMAL FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG CHARACTERIZED BY LUXEMBOURG PRESIDENCY SOURCE AS QUALIFIED SUCCESS. ONLY TWO SUBJECTS DISCUSSED WERE DIRECT ELECTIONS TO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND TINDEMANS' REPORT. ON DIRECT ELECTIONS CHOICE NARROWED TO TWO OPTIONS, THE FRENCH PROPOSAL TO MAINTAIN PRESENT COMPOSITION AND SIZE OF PARLIAMENT AND THE BELGIAN PROPOSAL TO SLIGHTLY MORE THAN DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF SEATS WITH HALF ALLOCATED AS PRESENTLY AND HALF DISTRIBUTED
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PAGE 02 LUXEMB 00508 151924Z

PROPORTIONATELY AMONG THE MEMBER STATES. (PARAGRAPH 4 REFTEL).

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EEC PRESIDENT THORN AT LEAST IS OPTIMISTIC THAT ONE OR THE OTHER FORMULA CAN BE ADOPTED BEFORE THE SUMMER VACATIONS. MAIN ACHIEVEMENT ON TINDEMANS' REPORT, ACCORDING TO SOURCE, WAS THAT IT "WAS NOT BURIED." AN ELABORATE MECHANISM WAS AGREED UPON TO KEEP IT UNDER STUDY AND DISCUSSION IN EEC FORUMS. END SUMMARY.

1. MEETING IN THE INFORMAL SETTING OF THE CHATEAU DE SENNIGEN IN LUXEMBOURG, THE EEC FOREIGN MINISTERS REPORTEDLY ENGAGED IN SERIOUS, FRANK DISCUSSION OF VARIOUS OPTIONS FOR ALLOCATING THE SEATS IN A DIRECTLY ELECTED EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. A FRENCH PROPOSAL OUTLINED BY GISCARD D'ESTAING AT THE APRIL 1 AND 2 EUROPEAN COUNCIL TO MAINTAIN THE PRESENT SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF THE PARLIAMENT (198) WAS SUPPORTED BY EIGHT OF THE NINE MINISTERS PRESENT. ITALY DROPPED ITS OBJECTIONS AND THE U.K. WAS THE ONLY HOLDOUT.

2. THE OTHER OPTION SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED WAS THE BELGIAN PLAN TO ADD 203 SEATS TO THE PRESENT NUMBER WITH THE ADDITIONAL SEATS DISTRIBUTED ACCORDING TO PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION. THE DIVISION ON THIS PROPOSAL WAS AGAIN EIGHT TO ONE, THIS TIME WITH FRANCE OPPOSING.

3. IT WAS CLEAR THAT SEVEN OF THE NINE MEMBER STATES WERE PREPARED TO ACCEPT EITHER OF THE TWO PLANS. THE LUXEMBOURG PRESIDENCY WAS ENCOURAGED BOTH BY A FLEXIBILITY IT DETECTED IN SAUVAGNARGUES' POSITION ON THE BELGIAN PLAN AND BY CROSLAND'S APPARENT REALIZATION THAT OTHER MEMBER STATES HAD REGIONAL PROBLEMS AS WELL AS THE UNITED KINGDOM, E.G. THE FRG. THE SEVEN APPEALED STRONGLY TO FRANCE AND THE U.K. TO GET A MANDATE FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS TO COMPROMISE ON ONE OR THE OTHER PLAN. THE EC PRESIDENCY DISCERNED SOME HINT THAT FRANCE AND THE U.K. MIGHT WORK SOMETHING OUT DURING GISCARD'S JUNE 20 VISIT TO LONDON, IF NOT BEFORE.

4. THE MINISTERS AGREED THAT IF A SOLUTION TO THE SEATING PROBLEM IS NOT REACHED BY THE JUNE 1-2 EC FOREIGN MINISTERIAL MEETINGS IN BRUSSELS, A SPECIAL MINISTERIAL MEETING WILL BE HELD PRIOR TO THE JULY 10
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EUROPEAN COUNCIL.

5. ON THE TINDEMANS' REPORT, IT WAS CLEAR THAT FRANCE WAS OPPOSED TO ESTABLISHING ANY PERMANENT GROUP TO PERPETUATE DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLY ACTION ON TINDEMANS' PROPOSALS. UNDER THE STRONG URGING OF THE OTHER MEMBERS STATES, HOWEVER, SAUVAGNARGUES AGREED THAT A "SUPERVISORY GROUP" COURLD BE ESTABLISHED TO KEEP THE REPORT UNDER ACTIVE STUDY.

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(THERE MAY BE PHILOSOPHICAL SIGNIFICANCE--AS THERE APPEARS
TO BE NO LINGUISTIC SIGNIFICANCE--IN THE FACT THAT FRANCE
REJECTED THE TITLE OF "COORDINATING GROUP" AND INSISTED
ON "SUPERVISORY GROUP.") THE GROUP, BY WHATEVER
NAME, WILL DISCUSS THE REPORT CHAPTER BY CHAPTER, MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS TO VARIOUS EC ORGANS AND WORK OUT PROCEDURES
FOR IMPLEMENTING EC DECISIONS ON THE REPORT.

6. THERE WAS DIFFICULT DEBATE ON WHETHER THE SUPER-
VISORY GROUP SHOULD BE A PERMANENT WORKING GROUP OR AN AD HOC
GROUP CONSISTING OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE TO DEAL WITH DIFFERENT
ASPECTS OF THE REPORT. THE FRENCH INSISTED ON THE LATTER
WHILE THE OTHER EIGHT PRESSED FOR THE FORMER. IT WAS
AGREED THAT THE PRESIDENCY WOULD CALL REGULAR MEETINGS
OF THE SUPERVISORY GROUP AND ASK EACH OF THE GOVERNMENTS
TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES. THIS WOULD LEAVE THE WAY OPEN
FOR THE EIGHT TO SEND THE SAME OFFICIAL TO EACH SUPERVISORY
MEETING WHILE THE FRENCH COULD, IF THEY WISHED, SEND A
DIFFERENT PERSON EACH TIME, E.G. SOMEONE FROM THE FINANCE
MINISTRY WHEN FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE REPORT ARE UNDER
DISCUSSION, SOMEONE FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WHEN FOREIGN
POLICY IS UNDER DISCUSSION AND SO FORTH. THE EC PRESIDENCY
WILL CALL THE FIRST MEETING OF THE SUPERVISORY GROUP BEFORE
THE JUNE 1 MINISTERIAL MEETING.

7. TIED TO THE DECISION TO ESTABLISH A SUPERVISORY GROUP
WAS THE COMMITMENT BY ALL NINE MINISTERS TO KEEP THE
TINDEMANS' REPORT UNDER CONTINUOUS DISCUSSION. THEY AGREED
THAT AT LEAST SEVERAL HOURS OF EACH POLITICAL DIRECTORS
MEETING, FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING, FINANCIAL DIRECTORS
MEETING AND SO FORTH WOULD BE DEVOTED TO SOME ASPECT OF THE
REPORT. SINCE THE FRENCH INSISTED THAT THE SUPERVISORY
GROUP COULD NOT DISCUSS AN ASPECT OF THE REPORT UNTIL IT
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HAS BEEN DISCUSSED AT THE MINISTERIAL OR POLITICAL DIRECTORS
LEVEL, THE FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD A DESULTORY HALF HOUR
DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER TWO OF THE REPORT, THAT IS COMMUNITY
FOREIGN POLICY.

8. COMMENT: THE NOVELTY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS DISCUSSIONS
ON DIRECT ELECTIONS THIS TIME, ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE,
WAS THE SERIOUSNESS, SENSE OF URGENCY AND SENSE OF COMPROMISE
WHICH THE MINISTERS BROUGHT TO THE PROBLEM. IN CONTRAST,
THE ELABORATE PROCEDURES DESCRIBED ABOVE FOR DEALING WITH
TINDEMANS' PROPOSALS ARE CLEARLY LITTLE MORE THAN A ROCOCO
FIG LEAF FASHIONED TO HIDE THE NAKED DESIRE OF FRANCE AND
POSSIBLY SEVERAL OTHER MEMBER STATES TO SHELVE THE REPORT.
NONETHELESS, AS OUR EC PRESIDENCY SOURCE NOTED, THE FACT
THAT THE REPORT IS BEING KEPT ALIVE PROBABLY REPRESENTS

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A PSYCHOLOGICAL VICTORY FOR THE COMMUNITY. MOREOVER, IF
THE NINE CONTINUES TO DISCUSS THE REPORT, IT IS JUST POSSIBLE
THAT SOMETHING MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE DONE TO IMPLEMENT SOME OF
ITS SUBSTANTIVE PROPOSALS. PHILLIPS

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